

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Ty Fernandes Wrenn. I am a youth organizer with Radical Advocates of Cross Cultural Education (RACCE), based out of Waterbury. As a part of RACCE, I am also a part of the Community First Coalition (<https://www.communityfirstcoalition.com>). I am submitting testimony on a variety of bills today.

The opinions presented aim to make our education systems more positive environments for the youth of Connecticut to feel safer and more welcome to learn and thrive as they should. Currently, with the state of policing in Connecticut and what some of these bills propose, our students are not able to learn and grow as optimally as they could be. The students, especially Black and brown students, are constantly being intimidated and negatively impacted by means that this state deems as public safety. As the Community First Coalition we would like to challenge how we as a state think about public safety and redefine it, to look more like conditions where students can learn and thrive.

What's most important is that committee members reconsider the validity and usefulness of many of the bills introduced today. I offer my support for:

In Support: S.B. No. 387

We offer our support for Sec. 5. Specifically, we endorse the codification of the collection and reporting of data that reflects a myriad of important information of when a police officer engages any person in a traffic or pedestrian stop. However, we urge the committee to strengthen the language so that police interventions in schools are collected and reported on in the same exact way. This is because we know there are thousands of police-led interventions in schools each year that go uncatalogued. Furthermore, this committee should add additional language that models the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee recommendations that would lead to increased community ownership of school-based 9-1-1 call data so that students, parents, and credible community messengers can be fully aware of the reasons, frequency, and for whom police are being called to schools for.

**In Opposition to legislation that increases electronic monitoring and/or GPS Monitoring:
H.B. No. 5417, H.B. No. 5418 & S.B. No. 365 and S.B. 16**

We are vehemently opposed to any legislation that increases the electronic monitoring and/or GPS surveillance of youth, especially Black and Brown youth or adults in our communities. These types of technologies *“are engineered to guarantee that a person who was criminalized in the past or present will, by design, continue to be criminalized in the future, whether or not they break any laws. Since a key feature of our legal structure is to separate out and exclude people, law enforcement oriented data-driven technologies are designed to ensure that targeted people fit into criminalized categories that justify exclusion under and beyond the law.”*

**In Opposition to legislation that increases support and training for law enforcement personnel to apply for detention orders for youth accused of crimes.
S.B. No. 365 and H.B. No.5418:**

Any increase of support, including training of any kind for police officers to apply for detention orders will lead to an increase of youth in our community being placed in prisons or prison-like conditions.

In Opposition to legislation that increases the likelihood that youth are transferred into the adult criminal justice system or proceedings.

S.B. No. 365 and H.B. 5418:

The campaign to criminalize Black and Brown youth by making it more likely they are treated as adults is one of the ways the school-to-prison pipeline is codified. These types of recommendations disregard the science of child and brain development and are seated in a formula derived from *“the superpredator myth [that] included the largest*

expansion in history in the U.S. prison population, which increased by more than one million between 1980 and 2000.”

In Opposition to legislation that increases the likelihood of children being placed in detention facilities, and the sharing of juvenile records to facilitate incarcerating children.

H.B. 5418:

Under no circumstances can we or should you accept the conditions this bill creates for children. Our young people's welfare and confidential records should be protected at any and all costs. The moral outrage we have for the recommendations that potentially strip Fourth Amendment rights from children so that they can be more easily locked up, even for as little as six hours, is literally unspeakable in this forum.

It is for these reasons and more we hope this committee and its members decide to protect children and keep them out of prisons at all cost.

Sincerely,

Ty Fernandes Wrenn
he/him/his
RACCE Youth Organizer